

# CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL OF POPULAR LITERATURE

Science and Art.

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.

No. 270.

SATURDAY, MARCH 5, 1859.

PRICE 1½d.

## ON THE MARCH.

It is one o'clock in the morning; and after panting and tossing through four hours of restlessness, we are about to sink into a state as nearly resembling sleep as can be arrived at in a July's night in Bengal, when our rest is broken by the shrill sounds of the first bugle. There is a melancholy pleasure in putting off evil till the last moment, in the illusion that, by so doing, we may avert the scourge—perhaps for ever. The condemned felon, as he ascends the scaffold, lingers on the threshold of his fate, and the hope of the coming reprieve stays his step as he marches to indubitable doom. It is thus with us whose rest is disturbed by the voice of that shrill monitor, and we still linger abed with a half-wakeful feeling that we ought not to be there, and yet with an overpowering sense of somnolence and recklessness; but just as slumber is stealing over us again—like a cloak, as Sancho says—hark! the second bugle; and up we jump with a painful consciousness of being too late: hurry on our clothes with the rapidity of lightning; and after gulping down a cup of abomination, composed of equal proportions of cold water and hot milk, ignite a cheroot, and emerge into open air. It would be quite dark if it was not for the starlight, brilliant enough to make darkness visible, and no more. If there had been sufficient light to distinguish objects, the scene would have been singular in the extreme; but as it is, the hum of voices, and the active stir of preparation, alone makes us conscious of the busy life without. As the sense of vision becomes more accustomed to the gloom, we are enabled to discern objects, though dimly and imperfectly. Indistinct forms of soldiers hurry to and fro, seeking, in the dark, for their arms and accoutrements, and addressing each other by the euphonious appellations of Dick and Bill; horses neigh vigorously, and salute each other with their heels, to the imminent risk of the bystander. The ebon forms of *khitmutgars* and *bearers* glance through the nebulous gloom, their white turbans and snowy drapery standing out sharply in relief. Camp-followers, like swarms of locusts, muster thickly around, busily engaged in packing up traps, loading camels, and exchanging compliments with each other in language more copious than select. Suddenly, the moon, struggling through a cloud, shews her cold pale face upon the scene, which, in a moment, undergoes a sudden change, quick as a dissolving-view. The tents are in a state of collapse; down they come; and the camp, but lately studded with white canvas, regularly laid out, disappears as completely as if it

had been engulfed into the bowels of the earth. Standing amid the débris of our prostrate dwellings, we note the scene around, where confusion worse confounded meets the eye at every turn. Camels are to be descried sprawling on the ground, uttering piteous groans, as rolls of canvas, camel trunks, *pitarals* (tin-boxes), tent-poles, are thrown upon their backs; stretching their long necks from their misshapen bodies—like turtles looking out of their shells—and rolling their small lustreless eyes with a mournful expression of appealing sympathy. Elephants with their Brobdignagian forms, huge unwieldy heads, weak watery eyes, and ample feet, are trumpeting to each other, and throwing their long trunks into the air in fantastic curls. Further from the camp are the horses of the *sowars* (native troopers), picketed in parallel lines to each other, stamping the ground with their hoofs, and filling the air with their shrill outcries. Of every colour of the rainbow, the brutes present a motley spectacle to the eye—

White, gray, and chestnut, yellow, black, and blue.

But, hark! what sound is that, making night hideous, and striking the ear as if all the fiends of lower air were engaged in one discordant jubilee? Is it Discord herself come to strike up a tintamarre? If you cast your eye to the left, you will perceive the cause. The *hackaries* (native carts) are beginning to leave camp, and as these vehicles are unprovided with springs—their wooden wheels revolving upon wooden axles—hence the shrieking and groaning of these lugubrious machines. One by one, with the tardy pace of a funeral-carriage, they drop out of camp, the *gariwan* (cart-driver) accelerating the pace of his inert bullock by the ingenious method of twisting the tail of that sluggish animal. And now all is ready, and the troops muster for the march. You mount your horse, and, supposing you are attached to the advance-guard, ride slowly out of camp, followed by a swarm of dusky *sowars*, their horses plunging, and rearing, and neighing, standing erect on their hind-legs, and using other playful gambols in the endeavour to unseat their riders. Your first essay is to thread the most questionable ground in search of the main road, before reaching which, you will most probably find yourself landed at the bottom of a nullah, or will have to run the gauntlet of a net-work of land-cracks, which form one of the attractions of this debatable land. Once fairly on the march, the column winds its tardy and snake-like course through a country flat as a pancake, dotted here and there with clumps of trees, now silvered by the moonbeams, now cast into shade with

the alternations of light and shadow. The light and graceful tamarind; the banyan, with its pendulous branches and expanding shade; the mango, with its green and luxuriant foliage; the fragile palm, and the waving plantain, add a pleasing diversity to the landscape. Villages of irregular shape, with their long narrow streets, dingy houses, yelping curs, squalling brats, mean shops, where are displayed, in the street, grain, fruit, and sweetmeats—the latter presenting a singularly dark and uninvisiting appearance—are scattered thickly about. Sometimes a Hindoo temple shoots up, white and solitary, into the sky, of picturesque, but by no means handsome exterior, through the half-open door of which you may catch a glimpse of the fantastic deities within—huge misshapen monsters, with red lips and goggle eyes, boasting arms by the dozen, and gazing comfortably around, though encumbered with an addition to the original cranium of a couple of heads.

As the troops advance, we have time to note their appearance. Behind the rear-guard is seen the cavalry; the English trooper, with his pale, and too often sickly countenance; the sowar, with his *karkee* tunic, long boots, waving locks, untouched by the comb, variegated saddle, easy seat on horseback, with his knees up to his eyes, body swaying wildly about, eyes flashing forth uncurbed passions, and love of plunder. Behind them, again, the infantry and artillery, who can only be distinguished by clouds of dust, out of which occasionally emerges a dusty, fagged, jaded individual, with a musket in his hand, unshaven, unwashed, his uniform hanging loosely upon him; very different from the smart, active, well-dressed private, as he appeared on the regimental parade before the barracks at home. In the rear extend for miles long lines of huckaries (carts), elephants, camels, and all the paraphernalia of Indian warfare. Rolling long clouds of dust into upper air, the motley cavalcade creeps slowly along, like the tail of a comet attached to its nucleus, the small clump of glittering bayonets in front. And through all this scene of heat, noise, shouting, and dust, sits the cart-driver, as undisturbed as patience herself, perched on the front of his groaning, tortured vehicle, white, actually white with accumulated dust, streaming with perspiration, and yet with a look of philosophical resignation that might have struck envy into the heart of a stoic.

Nine o'clock! and the sun pours down his rays with all the fervour of an Indian summer. The men begin to flag, and drop to the rear by the half-dozen; beasts begin to fail; the elephant even, undulating his huge carcass from side to side, like a three-decker in a gale of wind, shews symptoms of exhaustion. The effects of the half-hour's halt at daylight are fast wearing away. But we have not long to wait now; the camp is at hand; and at length the column, no longer martial and erect, but with its crest daggled and drooping, wheels slowly in beneath a grove or 'tope' of trees, which is the resting-place for the day. The men are dismissed, and break off into groups, produce short pipes, and devote themselves to the great plant. Officers, hastily unbuckling their swords, throw themselves on the ground, and endeavour to snatch a few minutes' repose. By degrees, and at long intervals, the baggage drops in. Now all is confusion and bustle again; unloading of animals, gabbling of domestics, shouts, orders, the buzz of voices; sowars riding wildly about at the gallop, their hair streaming in the wind, their turbans, in disorder, fluttering like streamers behind their heads—their sharp-cut, savage features gleaming with excitement; Sikhs, with their handsome faces, long hair, like a woman's, gathered in a knot on the top of their heads, athletic forms, and bold independent air, lounge slowly past, or salute each

other in unknown tongues. Now the camp is marked out, and the position of each duly allotted. Up go the white tents, and, 'as from the stroke of an enchanter's wand,' a city of canvas, regularly laid out, whitens the surface of the earth. Pickets are thrown out, the Europeans repair to their tents, silence is restored, and only a few stragglers linger on the scene, but lately alive with noise and uproar. Look at those two groups, the antithesis of each other; let us approach and examine them more closely. There are half-a-dozen European soldiers inside a *pol* (small tent), all in dishabille, some reclining at full length on the ground, others standing in an easy attitude, smoking with the quiet dignity of Britons. They are all the true type of the John Bull—large limbed, broad chested, full faced, with a Boeotian look of stolid dullness. A *darogah* (police-officer) approaches this group with hesitating steps and timid mien. He is dressed in white, with a brilliant shawl wrapped round his loins, his head enveloped in a turban of motley hue, beneath which shines his dark, mahogany countenance, regular features, white teeth, jet-black beard, and eyes glistening like those of the basilisk, with an expression of cunning rather than ferocity. A gigantic sword glitters on his thigh, sheathless and trenchant, and in his belt are two formidable-looking horse-pistols, manufactured in the year one, and only meant for show. *Pigamas* (drawers) of a pink colour hang in folds about his ankles, and his feet are encased in shoes, or rather slippers, of rich red, curving upwards in a point at the toes. With a graceful salam, he addresses himself to the nearest of the soldiers, a short, squat individual, with a countenance suggestive of animal food and ardent spirits.

'Colonel Sahib hagar hi?' (Is the colonel present?) Now, it is a remarkable fact, that, although not understanding one syllable of the native tongue, the British soldier will always attempt a conversation in the dialect of the east.

*Soldier.* (With much gesticulation, and a vain attempt to catch the accent.) 'Hab, Colonel, Sahib—tent—there. D'ye twig, blackie?

The dusky *darogah* smiles blandly. 'Ap ungreegee bolta!' (You are speaking English!)

*Soldier.* (loquiter.) I say, Bill, there's this ere cove a-wanting some grease to bolt with. Bolt indeed! That's what ye be a-wanting. Bolt, you black rascal ye, or I'll scoop your eyes out of your ugly head.

*Bill* (In a voice inarticulate from tobacco smoke.) Knock the (expletive) nigger over the pate, and (expletive) let him wait there till I come and pick him up.

The *darogah*, in spite of his warlike appearance, looks uneasy, and slinks away from the dangerous vicinity.—Group number two consists of several camp-followers, mild Hindoos, clad, or rather disappareled, in dingy *kumarbands* (waistbands), busily employed in preparing their morning meal. The first care is to seek for wood, which is done in the twinkling of an eye, blackie collecting it in some mysterious manner from the grass around. This done, the *otah* (a species of flour) is produced, from which he quickly manufactures a thin flat cake which goes by the name of *jipati*; this is placed on a brass plate, and laid on the fire, and his culinary preparations are complete. When ready, this cake, to which a little rice is sometimes added, forms his simple meal, which he devours with the gusto of an epicure, lingering over it as if he could have enjoyed the pleasure for ever. Then comes the dessert, the *bubble-bubble* (small hookah), and he is at the acme of enjoyment. The water bubbles in the cocoa-nut, and his soul is in the seventh heaven. The Sikh is denied this enjoyment, smoking being prohibited among the disciples of Govind; but he makes up

for it in other ways, swallowing down enormous quantities of ardent spirits and intoxicating drugs. By and by, a young officer in her Majesty's service emerges from a neighbouring tent in the primitive costume of his ancestors, the ancient Britons, when in dishabille. He has a big stick in one hand, and a pair of boots in the other, and, by his flushed countenance and furious air, has evidently worked himself up to a high pitch of mental and physical excitement.

*Officer.* Here you bearer, nigger, rascal, *quee hee*.

Conscious of the coming storm, the dusky domestic has intrenched himself behind an adjacent tent-rope, and shews no decided inclination to be won over by these endearments.

*Officer.* (In unmistakable English, and elevating his voice.) And you did not clean my boots, you scoundrel! Clean boots, thus—(imitating with his hands the act of polishing shoes). Well, you infernal reprobate, knave, what do you say to this?—'Hum?'—'Boot?' Devil take their lingo. Will you answer, you scamp?

Blackie's reply is somewhat irrelevant:

'Hum gureeb admi kodabund.' (I am a poor man, my lord.)

His lordship, not in any way softened by the rejoinder, overflows with wrath, and makes a frantic rush at the object of his ire, pinions him with one hand, while, with the other, he administers repeated applications of the ratan.

'You blackguard (whack), not to clean my boots. Never been accustomed in all my life. Just like them (whack). What can you expect from a black-face! Take that, and that, and that.' (Whack, whack, whack.)

His lordship forgets that he is not at his club in London, and that the (expletive) nigger has walked fifteen miles, and has not yet tasted food; but why wonder that such trifling matters should have escaped his recollection?

Twelve o'clock! the earth is like an oven; the sun pierces through the canvas walls of the tents, and strikes hot and fiery upon the occupants within. We gasp for breath, and wander savagely about in drawers, in the vain endeavour to find a cool spot somewhere. And now the summons to breakfast, and we sit down to table (our khimutgar standing behind our chair with his hands meekly folded before him), and go through the form of a meal—no more. That over, comes the tranquillising pipe. After inhaling a sufficient quantum of tobacco, we make a desperate attempt at sleeping, but the heat is too great to enable us to woo the sweets of Morpheus.

Thus passes the day till the shades of evening fall, when we emerge from our suffocating dens, and inhale the evening breezes. Dinner in the open air, 'with what appetite we may,' concludes the day, and we retire to rest, with the pleasing anticipation of being disturbed at the same hour on the morrow.

This sketch depicts an ordinary march in India, but, of course, when in presence of the enemy, it is considerably more arduous and harassing.

#### 'FOOLS RUSH IN WHERE ANGELS FEAR TO TREAD.'

AND sometimes with great advantage too. Angels we take to be timid, considerate beings, reverent of difficulties, sensitive as to improprieties, modest about their own pretensions to a right of opinion or of action; hence extremely apt to keep back and do nothing, where they ought to go on, and might do a great deal. If, while the angel stands hesitating, and letting the opportunity glide past, the fool, with a happy insensibility to hazards, rushes in, and does what is wanted, even though he has outraged common sense and prudence a little, is he not on the

whole to be commended? I cannot see the least ground for any but an affirmative answer.

It would be curious to inquire how many great victories folly has achieved where angelic wisdom would most probably have failed. A considerable number of Suwarrow's would have to be ranked in this category—some of our own Nelson's too—some also of Charles James Napier's. It is told that, when a brilliant exploit of an eccentric officer of George II.'s time was praised at court, it was remarked, in objection: 'Oh, but the man's mad!' when the king remarked: 'I wish he would bite some of my generals.' The other men were men of square and rule, who obeyed orders, and never either made any great mistake, or achieved any great success. This one, greatly daring, performed what was to them a kind of miracle. Fools of that kind are really useful occasionally. There was a general conviction, all through the war with Russia, that something of the sort was much needed just then. The means adopted in the Baltic, in particular, were thought to be decidedly too angelic. Cronstadt was a nut which cool judgment never could crack—but folly might. Doubtless, we should be much more impressed with the potentialities of Folly for good in military affairs, if it were not that, when she has done a clever thing, we are so apt to set it down as a piece of wisdom—just as

Treason is ne'er successful—what's the reason?  
'Cause when successful, none dare call it treason.

It is past telling how much credit she loses in this way.

Could we learn the whole of the successes achieved by Folly, history would have to be re-written. Not only would there be great conquests to transfer to her account—heretofore deemed the fruit of profound calculation and foresight—but we should probably have to credit her with not a few of those great state changes by which the interests of mankind are believed to have been most chiefly advanced. Let us whisper it with very great humbleness; but even in religion it might be shewn that we have occasionally owed a debt to Folly, where high reasoning and the utmost devotion to principle might have failed. It was, alas! the folly, not the wisdom of Henry VIII., which gave England the Reformation. Little more than ten years ago, there was a great European state lying in an anomalous condition for want of a head. A fool, or at least a person who had hitherto passed as such, rushed in, and made a throne for himself, where, to all appearance, scarcely any other kind of person would have succeeded. His success inclines us to reverse old opinions, but—wait the end.

In civil and ordinary affairs, we are continually seeing great things done by Folly, where angels would have hesitated to interfere. The celebrated legal case of — was universally looked on as hopeless. The shrewd people shook their heads, and did nothing. The benevolent were interested, but dreaded to come forward. In these circumstances, it was taken up by Tomkins, whom all men repudiate a fool, and, through infinite difficulties, it was carried to a successful conclusion. The — Bank, now paying 10 per cent. on the capital, was not started by any of the sagacious men who have since conducted it, but by that empty-headed fellow Durden, who, when the first directors came to be chosen, was (to his own great astonishment) excluded from the list, under a general sense of his utter inability to speak a sentence of common sense or to hold his tongue. That newspaper, of such transcendent popularity, and such success as a speculation, was commenced by no able editor, no high-class politician or statesman, but by simple Jones, whom no one would intrust with the writing of a paragraph where any judgment was required, and

whose whole mental powers would have previously been thought dearly purchased at a hundred a year. The subscription for the great — Testimonial was commenced by no man of eminent sagacity or well-attained influence. People of that sort would have thought it a ridiculous fancy, impossible of realisation. It originated with one happily under no control of modesty, or fear of trouble, or of failure, and who 'went at' difficulties merely because he had not the sense to see them. And so on of a hundred actual things, established for the use and gratification of us mortals, or which we are glad to have seen done. Here, too, Folly is often deprived of her just credit, merely because we are so apt to associate wisdom with success—because, in short, the effect glorifies the cause.

We must, however, discriminate. If we carefully trace the history of Folly, we shall find that her great successes are confined to *coups de main*, revolutions, desperate ventures, dangerous projects, commencements of new religious sects, and so forth. She is great at a sudden start or a beginning. It must be once and away with her. For the carrying on of anything, we must discharge her like the bank-originator above alluded to, and take to the guardian-ship of cool judgment and discretion.

We can put her under no rule; all calculation she defies. Philosophy cannot assist her. She must be left to force her own way, if she can. When she has accomplished her wondrous results, and set us all a-gazing, we may, as soon as we gather our senses, examine the way she took, the means she employed, and think we see how she flabbergasted her opponents, how she secured the plaudits of the populace, how it all came about. But, as her course is not that of wisdom, and must be audaciously original on each new occasion, it is evident that wisdom can take no cognizance of it beforehand, or ever teach good sense even to simulate it. The triumphs of Folly, therefore, must be regarded as only grand exceptive cases, very interesting to witness, but barren of instruction for the guidance of either angels or men.

#### TELEGRAPHIC PROGRESS—OVER HOUSE WIRES.

It may safely be predicted that the electro-telegraphic system will yet be rendered available for many useful purposes, at present hardly thought of. The powers of this marvellous agent, cannot fail of further development. Time and space, two of the great difficulties which man is always attempting to conquer, are brought under control by electric means, to a greater extent than by any other natural agent available for practical use; and it will be our own fault if we do not apply still further the bounteous gift placed at our disposal. Leaving all the greater operations of electro-telegraphy (of which the readers of the *Journal* have been kept pretty well informed) untouched in the present article, let us just notice one or two matters connected with the local distribution of intelligence or signals in any one city or town.

These minor applications of electric power may be classed into *time-balls*, *electric clocks*, and *local telegraphs*.

A time-ball, such as that which Professor Airy caused to be constructed at Greenwich, is not merely a clock of wonderful accuracy; it is practically a monster clock, whose indications are visible from a very great distance. True, it tells its tale only once a day, and is used chiefly as a regulator of clocks and watches, chronometers and time-pieces elsewhere; but at this particular hour, its accuracy transcends that of all ordinary clocks; while its indications are

visible from a distance far greater even than those of the clock at the New Houses of Parliament. The Greenwich time-ball is so generally known, that a few words of description will suffice. On the top of the observatory is a large, hollow, coloured ball, which slides up and down a pole passing through its centre. Mechanical apparatus effects all the usual movements of the ball; but electrical contrivances cause the sudden descent of the ball exactly at one o'clock every day. The astronomical clock belonging to the observatory, one of the most perfect ever constructed, gives a click or movement to a particular piece of mechanism, at that particular moment; and the movement is communicated through an electric wire to the ball, or rather to a lever which retains the ball in its place; this lever being affected, the ball falls through a distance of many feet. Now, the movement of a spherical body, standing out in bold projection against the sky, can be seen from a very considerable distance. Captains of ships passing down the Thames, can see the descent of this ball (if at one o'clock in the day), and can regulate their chronometers by this signal.

When once the usefulness of the Greenwich time-ball became apparent, an extension of the same system was naturally to be expected. The Electric Telegraph Company erected a time-ball on the summit of their establishment in the Strand. At the very instant when the Greenwich time-ball falls, an electric current is sent through a wire from the observatory to the Strand—which wire passes under roads and streets, and over the Thames; the time of transmission is shorter than human means can measure; for all practical purposes, the two balls descend at the same instant, although the source of power is close to the one, and several miles distant from the other. An example of great public spirit was given by a London tradesman, as a means of serving his neighbours. Mr French, the chronometer-maker of Cornhill, erected a time-ball at the top of his premises. The ball is visible from many parts of the river, for it stands at a height of a hundred and fifty feet above the mean water-level; and it can also easily be seen from many of the streets in the city. The ball is made of zinc, and is five feet and a half in diameter. In Edinburgh, on the top of Nelson's Monument, and in Glasgow, on the tower of the Sailors' Home, there are time-balls under precisely similar arrangements, for the use of the shipping in those ports. There is another belonging to the Admiralty at Deal; and one at Liverpool belonging to the Electric Telegraph Company; and we may reasonably anticipate that most of our great sea-ports will, one by one, avail themselves of this admirable contrivance; for the expense is a mere trifle compared with the amount of service rendered. Of course, so far as the principle is concerned, the ball might be made to fall at any other hour instead of one o'clock, or might do so on many different hours of the day—that is a mere matter of practical convenience.

Concerning *electric clocks*, many persons imagine that there is electrical mechanism within each clock, which 'goes' independently of all other clocks; such, however, is not the case. An electrical clock is little more than a skeleton; its interior mechanism is small in quantity, and not very complex. The face (illuminated at night), the figures on the face, and the hands that travel round from figure to figure, are the chief components. There is a central clock (say at Greenwich) which gives the right time, and electric wires convey impulses from this clock to the electric clocks, wherever and how many soever they may be; there is mechanism which causes this impulse to be given to the hands. Theoretically, the number of clocks thus set going from one centre might be almost unlimited; it is simply a question of practical convenience. In front of the Electric Telegraph

Company's Office in the Strand is an electric clock for the use of the public; while within that and other offices of the same company, clocks of analogous action are very numerous. Most of the railway companies have facilities for correcting their station-clocks by electric agency. Time signals are sent hour by hour from Greenwich, and are transmitted through the Electric Company's wires to various stations and towns in the United Kingdom—an achievement truly wonderful, were it not that we have almost ceased to wonder at such things.

Let us now proceed to the subject of *local telegraphs*—those which do not travel to great distances.

It needs hardly a word of explanation to shew that a copper-wire, connected with the proper electric apparatus, might convey a signal from room to room, as well as from city to city. Some of the monster hotels of America have already adopted the system; and it is, we believe, adopted in the Houses of Parliament, to ring all the bells in the several committee rooms at four o'clock, to denote that 'the speaker is at prayers,' and that the committees must close their labours for the day. Few manufacturing establishments are large enough to render such a contrivance necessary; seeing that a gutta-percha speaking-tube suffices; yet there are breweries which cover several acres each, and a few other large establishments fitted to profit by an electric telegraph. One London firm, however, Messrs Waterlow, have adopted the system under a singular form. They have formed a *house-top* telegraph between two factories situated in different parts of the metropolis. Having obtained permission so to do, they arranged their posts on certain house-tops, stretched their wires high up across the streets, and established the requisite galvanic or magnetic batteries at the two terminal stations. Of course, in an arrangement of this kind, nothing can be done except with the consent—either by kindness or by purchase—of the owners of the houses thus so singularly over-topped.

The 'over-house' telegraph system has been adopted in Paris, Brussels, and New York, for local purposes; and the success of those attempts, coupled with that of Messrs Waterlow, has suggested the establishment of a company for applying the system on a very large scale in the metropolis. Without offering any opinion on the speculation, in a Stock Exchange point of view, we may briefly notice it in its topographical and mechanical features.

The proposal embraces, in the first instance, the means of electric communication between any place, within a radius of four miles from Charing Cross: an extension of the radius being easily practicable afterwards, if success should attend the opening enterprise. Within this circle of four miles' radius or eight miles' diameter, the metropolis has been hypothetically divided into eleven districts, each containing, on an average, nine stations, or about a hundred stations in all. The stations are so selected as to locality, that the delivery of a message may be made within a few minutes after its receipt. In a map, lithographed to illustrate the intentions of the projectors, about a hundred stations are marked down. One, a great central station, is near that great centre of the world's commerce—the Bank of England; ten others are district stations, each the principal station in a particular district; while all the rest are local stations, subordinate to the chief ones in the respective districts. The eleven central and district stations are, respectively, near the Bank, at Mile End Gate, at Kingsland Gate, at the Angel at Islington, at the junction of the Highgate and Hampstead Roads in Camden Town, at the junction of the New Road with Edgware Road, at Charing Cross, at the north end of Sloane Street, at the Elephant and Castle, at Camberwell Green, and at

Greenwich. All of these, except the last named, are within the four-mile radius. All the local stations are to be connected with the chief stations of the same districts; and all the district stations are to be directly connected by the nearest practicable routes; but wires will only be laid down from one minor station to another, according as they form parts of a main route. Thus, taking the map for our guidance, we find no wire marked out direct from Highbury to Kingsland; in order to save expense, the current of electricity will be sent by a circuitous route along wires extending from both of these outposts, and meeting in the city; but as the 'lightning messenger' reckons not of distance, it is of little consequence whether the circuit be a mile or two more or less. Thus, again, there is nothing from Kilburn to Camden Town, except round by the New Road and Seymour Street; nothing from Bayswater to Kensington, except *via* Charing Cross; in short, it is a topographical problem, how to connect one hundred stations in the metropolis by the shortest length of wire.

Wherever practicable, it is proposed that the wires should be stretched up aloft on the 'over-house' method. This would be preferred, on the score of cheapness in the erection, of facility in the repairs of injuries, and of the avoidance of interruption to public streets by any underground arrangements. To what extent, however, such a plan would be practically avoidable, is one of many problems which would have to be solved. Two or three existing companies have telegraphic wires underlying the streets of the metropolis; and these might, possibly, under amicable arrangements, be made in part available for the local telegraph.

Now, as to the kinds and varieties of purposes for which this metropolitan net-work would be serviceable. The scheme of the projectors may possibly not be altogether reliable, as to the sources and amount of profit; but it will, at any rate, serve to indicate the views entertained as to the requirements of the public. The one hundred stations, and the many scores of miles of wire would, it is estimated, contribute to the following end:—To convey government messages, military and civil, in connection with all public offices; to summon witnesses in the country to the law-courts in London, and to facilitate the proceedings of barristers and solicitors in relation to those courts; to convey messages and announcements pertaining to the important events of births, marriages, and deaths, of which there are no fewer than 160,000 annually in the metropolis; to summon medical practitioners at times and places where there is pressing need; to give notice to the several fire-brigade stations of the breaking out of a fire; to aid the police authorities in the various matters where promptness in police duties is important; to announce departure from, or arrival at, any of the metropolitan railway stations, on the thousand-and-one commercial and domestic matters which now so much affect men in this travelling age; to ascertain, before making a visit of business or pleasure, whether the person to be visited is 'at home'; to make or postpone appointments for meeting; to maintain communications between the business-houses and the suburban residences of 'city men'; to arrange with the existing telegraph companies for the collection of such of their messages as start from different parts of London, and for the delivery of such as are directed to London, in such manner that the general and the local telegraphs may mutually assist each other; to provide wires and instruments, which may extend from any one of the company's stations to any establishment belonging to government-offices, police-offices, fire-brigade stations, carriers, manufacturers, wholesale dealers, wharfingers, dock and canal companies, railway

companies, bankers, hotel-keepers, &c.; such wires to be used solely by and for the particular establishment paying for the accommodation.

The commercial question, as one of profit and loss, we have already decided not to notice here. We stop not to inquire whether they could send 10,000 messages a day from the central office alone? whether they could fit up all the stations, and provide all the wires and apparatus, for so low a sum as £35,000? whether we might or might not reasonably expect that one person in each family would use the telegraph, on an average, once in three months? whether the three million of souls in the metropolis would, even at this low average, bring £40,000 per annum to the company's coffers? whether the system would open a field for useful woman's work, as telegraphic clerks at the various stations?—these are questions to be decided on their own merits, by persons best fitted to estimate them; but we cannot hesitate to express a conviction that a system of local or street telegraphs, whether 'over-house' or otherwise, are among the things which we are destined to see ere long. But cheapness will be an indispensable feature of the plan, to insure success; the penny-post has spoiled us for any forms of transmission—whether of persons, messages, letters, or commodities—which involve the high charges of former days.

#### THE LATE EMPEROR SOULOUQUE.

The official journal of France informed the world not long ago that the Council of the order of the Legion of Honour had, after due deliberation, resolved that the order of St Faustin, founded by the Emperor of Hayti, should take its place among the decorations which French subjects would be permitted to wear; and as the honour of bearing this decoration might eventually be extended to English subjects also, we thought that the future knights of St Faustin among our readers would perhaps thank us for an introduction to the illustrious individual to whom the calendar of saints is indebted for a new name, and the College of Heralds for a new order. And thus, ignorant of the future, we wrote.

Like a humble river, whose waters have for years flowed smoothly on between level banks, but suddenly swelled by a thousand rills, grows into terrific magnitude, and spreads desolation around; so the fortunes of Faustin I. have sprung from a humble source, and have only been swelled into their imposing proportions by circumstances, in a great measure independent of his will. In 1804, his imperial majesty was servant to a certain mulatto general Lamarre, and was distinguished as a great, burly, good-humoured negro, an ignorant of letters as of state affairs; in 1847 he was elected president of the republic of Hayti. Between these two dates extends, not a series of great deeds, but a dead level of social and political insignificance. However, the position of president once attained, it is to his own exertions that Faustin owes a throne. Between 1847 and 1849 he established in the blood of his fellow-citizens his right to an imperial crown.

To understand the history of this emperor, we must go a little back in the history of his empire, which has most likely been forgotten by many amid more stirring events nearer home; although there is much to interest us in an empire formed of self-emancipated negro slaves, who, during the last fifty years, have alternately been proclaiming democratic republics 'in the presence of the Supreme Being,' and monarchs 'by the grace of God,' which has a titled nobility and a rigid court etiquette, but in which duchesses and marchionesses sell tobacco, soap, and spirits by the pennyworth; which has deliberative chambers and a daily press, but in which the

monarch is but just learning to spell; where the Roman Catholic faith is the recognised religion of the state, and professed by the whole people with few exceptions, but in which the dominant class worships fetiches and dances magic-dances.

Circumstances connected with the struggle for freedom, towards the close of the last century, in the French colony of St Domingo, as well as the difference of culture existing between the negroes and the mulattoes, laid the germs of animosity, from the first, between these two divisions of the coloured population of the island, and it broke out into open dissensions as soon as the whites had been expelled; although article 14 of the constitution proclaimed by Dessalines declared 'that as all distinctions of colour between children of the same family, whose father is the head of the state, must necessarily cease, the Haytians shall henceforward bear the exclusive generic denomination of Blacks,' no fusion of hearts followed this decreed fusion of colour; and the history of the island is but a record of a series of changes and revolutions brought about by the continued dissensions between black and yellow, now ending in a yellow republic, now in a black monarchy; to one of which Faustin owes his elevation to a throne.

In 1810 General Lamarre fell while defending Le Môle, for the mulatto party, against Christophe, then Haytian general, formerly waiter at a tavern, and subsequently king. Faustin Soulouque, by that time promoted to be his master's aid-de-camp, is said to have been charged by him to carry his heart to Pétion, who reigned as dictator over a republic in the south of the island, in which the half-castes predominated, while Christophe, a black, ruled the north with a royal sceptre. Pétion appointed Faustin Soulouque to a lieutenancy in his mounted body-guard; and at his death in 1818, bequeathed him to his successor, Boyer, as part of the goods and chattels of the presidency. Boyer attached him to the service of a certain Mademoiselle Joute, who had likewise been bequeathed to him by Pétion, and who employed Soulouque as superintendent of a spirit manufacture.

In 1847, Soulouque found himself commander of President Riché's guard; and upon the sudden death of that potentate, the votes of the senate, as well as the parties in the state, were equally divided between two candidates. Eight successive ballots having proved that neither of the parties would yield to solve the difficulty, the president of the senate—in which body the constitution vested the right of election—proposed a third candidate, who, for the simple reason that he was unknown to all, was unanimously elected; and thus, to his own surprise, as well as that of the rest of the world, Faustin Soulouque suddenly found himself chief of the republic of Hayti.

The new president, a man about sixty or sixty-two, but looking not above forty, was remarkable for his timidity, but timidity of a peculiar kind. He had an unconquerable fear of magic and of ridicule; and to this weakness must be attributed the bloodshed through which he has waded from the presidential chair to the imperial throne. Each of the presidents who succeeded Boyer and preceded Soulouque, had either died prematurely, or been deposed, before attaining the first anniversary of their election, and Soulouque's immediate predecessor, Riché, had even died on the very eve of this anniversary. These were suspicious circumstances, and quite sufficient to awaken the fears of the believers in Vandoux, among whom the new president was conspicuous. Vandoux is an African god, whose worship was transplanted to St Domingo by the negroes imported as slaves, and who reveals himself in the form of a snake, which, being shut up in a box for the purpose, communicates a knowledge of hidden things to his worshippers.

through the medium of a high priest and priestess, called respectively *papa-loi* and *mama-loi*, and who, in virtue of their connection with the snake, possess great magic powers. The worshippers of Vandoux among the former slaves of St Domingo—and the same is said to be the case among its present free inhabitants—formed a secret society, admission to which was preceded by a most solemn oath, delivered under circumstances the most terrific that the African imagination could invent. Sometimes a cup of goat's blood, still warm with the life of the animal from which it had been extracted, was quaffed in confirmation of the oath taken to suffer and to inflict death rather than to allow the mysteries of the society to transpire; sometimes the blood of an ox was substituted, and mixed with *tafia*, the spirits manufactured in the country, to give more zest to the ceremony.

Now, Soulouque had taken it into his head that some spell, worked by the help of Vandoux, had been the cause of the premature conclusion of the presidential career of his three predecessors, and that he would likewise come within its power by occupying the same palace and the same seat in the senate. However, Madame Soulouque having consulted on the subject a *mama-loi*, holding a distinguished position among the sorceresses of Port-au-Prince, was informed that no danger was attached to a seat in the presidential chair, but that the magic—for magic there was—was wrought by means of a doll, which had been buried by Boyer in the presidential garden, previous to his leaving the island; and that not until this magnificent doll had been restored to the light of day, would the spell be broken that doomed the career of each successive president to be cut short before the expiration of a twelvemonth after his election. Somewhat relieved by the tangible form thus given to his enemy, Soulouque immediately ordered search to be made in the garden, and also ordered counter-incantations to be performed by a certain Frère Joseph, whose history is so curious as to merit a digression.

During the disturbances which took place in the interval between the resignation of Boyer and the election of Soulouque, a negro, by name Acaan, clad in nature's simplest garb, with the exception of a linen cloth round his loins, a straw hat on his head, and a pair of huge spurs on his naked heels, repaired one day to the market-cross in his native village, and there publicly made a vow not to change his toilet until the 'orders of divine Providence had been carried out,' these orders being, as he explained to the crowd gathered around, that 'the poor black people' should expel all mulattoes, and divide their property. His auditors seem not to have been quite as far advanced as he in communistic doctrines, for a murmur ran through the assembly, and all eyes turned towards some poor, ragged mulattoes, who formed part of the assembly. 'Oh, those,' exclaimed Acaan, with ready wit, 'those are negroes!' and another black man, serving in a *tafia* manufacture in the neighbourhood, stepping forward, confirmed and extended the dictum in the following words: 'Acaan is right, for the Virgin has said (in negro French)—*Nègue riche qui connaît li et écrit, cila mulatto; mulatto pauvre, qui pas connaît li ni écrit, cila nègue.*' (A rich negro, who knows how to read and write, is a mulatto; a poor mulatto, who neither knows how to read or to write, is a negro). This black, whose name was Joseph, subsequently attached himself as military chaplain to Acaan's army, a band of half-naked savages, who went about the country pillaging, murdering, and burning, according to the principle laid down by him, and over whom he exercised considerable influence by means of his Vandoux incantations, which he varied at times with hymns to the Virgin, in order to suit all tastes. Clad in a white shirt and white troussers, and with a white handkerchief tied

round his head, Frère Joseph, as he was now called, might always be found urging the true distinction between negro and mulatto on his hearers, whenever sympathy of race inclined them to clemency towards a rich black; but when Acaan, after a career of indescribable atrocity, amid which he had proclaimed himself the 'protector of suffering innocence,' and the champion of 'the *eventuality* of education,' despairing of the gratitude of his fellow-men, blew out his brains with a pistol, Frère Joseph gave up his roving life, and devoting himself exclusively to witchcraft, settled in Port-au-Prince, where, as in some capitals nearer home, it seems that a tolerable living can be made by it.

Such was the man from whom Soulouque sought aid in his campaign against the buried doll and its malignant influences; but while these measures were going on, rumours of the state of superstitious terror in which the president was held got abroad; and he became the laughing-stock of the enlightened class of the community, who thus revenged upon him their own folly in having elected for their chief a man who could neither read nor write, and whom his nationality, under those circumstances, naturally laid open to such influences. Soulouque winced at the laughter; but the greater fear conquered the less, and the excavations in the garden continued; while on the other hand the president endeavoured, by the most assiduous attention to affairs, to deprecate the ridicule of the scoffers. Unfortunately, however, in spite of ministerial discretion, anecdotes illustrative of the gross ignorance and strange mistakes of the chief of the state began to circulate, and the laughter redoubled. This was unfair and unjust. Soulouque had attained his position by no intrigues of his own, but by the unanimous voice of the elective body; and if some of his early acts had betrayed the superstitious negro, others had given evidence of his sincere desire to do his duty. Again Soulouque winced, and now changed his tactics. An assumption of self-confident knowledge succeeded to his former naïve betrayal of ignorance. Dispatches and documents submitted to him were taken proudly from the hand of the minister or other official, perused with an air of profound attention, and then laid by, to be read and interpreted in secret by some confidant, possessing the art of letters. But hatred and distrust of the class who ridiculed him, while he was so anxious to propitiate their esteem, began to rankle in Soulouque's heart, and he drew nearer and nearer to the *ultra-black* party, who alone seemed to sympathise with him, and with whom he might speak pure creole without fear of being criticised. *Peuple Noir*, as they called themselves, who had so long been in slender favour in the highest quarters, were not slow to avail themselves of their good-fortune, and every morning some sable gossip brought to the palace some new joke or witticism, circulating at the president's expense, and which in his judgment confirmed the suspicions he had begun to entertain, that the whole of the mulatto and moderate black party were accomplices in the affair of the buried doll. Gradually, also, it became customary for a band of blacks, comprising the individuals most conspicuous for their antipathy to the mulatto race, to assemble round the palace gates on Sundays, and when the president returned from parade, to address him after the following primitive fashion: 'President, *peuple noir* desires that all men of colour shall in future be excluded from public offices;' and Soulouque, who, thanks to Vandoux exorcisms, had by this time got over the thirteenth month of his tenure of office, and who, thanks to repeated violations of the constitution and other acts of oppression which had remained unresented, had also got rid of his fear of mulatto superiority—Soulouque graciously granted the request. Another

day, 'black people' required that the red colour, the emblem of the half-castes, should be expunged from the national standard; then demanded the re-establishment of the constitution of 1816, which will transform the elective presidency into a dictatorship for life, the dismissal of the cabinet, and the substitution of simple secretaries for the responsible ministers. Soulouque, in whom the savage African nature had by this time conquered all the gentler instincts, was equally ready to cede to these demands, but prudently deferred their execution until a scene very similar to that of the slaughter of the janizaries by Sultan Mahmoud, should have struck such terror into the opposition as to prevent all resistance.

In accordance with this plan, on the 16th of April 1848, three cannon-shots from the palace gave the usual signal that the country was in danger. As prescribed by law, the country population, from fifteen miles around, began at once to crowd to the capital, while the inhabitants rushed armed into the streets; and generals, senators, deputies, and other functionaries hastened to the palace to inquire the cause of the alarm, and to ask for orders. Successive volleys of musketry, followed by shrieks of anguish, re-echoed through the town, soon gave the answer. Within the closed gates of the palace-yard, and even in the very corridors of the palace, the mulatto functionaries of all grades, who had crowded thither, were being deliberately murdered by the president's body-guard, assisted by the president himself, as a preliminary to the introduction of the constitution of 1816. Soon the work of slaughter spread from the palace to the streets. For three days the carnage continued, accompanied by pillage and incendiarism, the panic-stricken mulattoes offering no resistance, but flying to the foreign consulates, and on board the foreign ships of war, for protection. At length the consul of France, dwelling on the effect that would be produced on public opinion in Europe, succeeded in wresting a so-called amnesty from Soulouque, whose vanity, in spite of his barbarous acts, still craved for the approbation of the civilised world. But on receipt of the dreadful news from the capital, a mulatto insurrection at once broke out in the south. The president repaired thither. Denunciations, wholesale murders, confiscations, and illegalities of every degree of violence ensued. During six months, the island was deluged in blood; and not until the groans of the survivors had been stifled by terror, did Soulouque return to his capital through triumphal arches inscribed with the most enthusiastic welcomes. When he deigned to look at these, and express a word of approval, the enthusiasm of *peuple noir*, at the supposed fact that 'president had learned to read,' rose beyond all bounds. Every day the speeches emanating from the Haytian senate and chamber of deputies, from which every man of character had been eliminated, and recorded by the *Haytian Moniteur*, became more fulsomely adulatory, until, on the 25th of August 1849, in accordance with a petition presented by the people, and acceded to by the chambers, a troop of senators on horseback proceeded to the presidential palace, and imposed upon the head of President Faustin Soulouque, whose 'inexpressible benefactions' had 'consolidated the institutions' of the country, a crown of gilded pasteboard, in virtue of which he was in future to bear the title and to enjoy the immunities of Emperor of Hayti. His majesty Faustin I. responded to the senatorial speech by an enthusiastic '*Vive la liberté, vive l'égalité!*' and then, accompanied by a numerous cortège, and greeted by the acclamations of the people, he proceeded, amid salvos of artillery, to the church, where a *Te Deum* was performed, with such music as the chapel imperial could command, trumpets, clarions, and drums making up in noise what was wanting in harmony.

But the new emperor was not a man to rest satisfied with a pasteboard crown, however richly it might be gilded, nor with coronation by universal suffrage. Faithful worshipper of Vaudoux though he was, his greatest ambition was to be numbered among Christian monarchs, and in consequence, negotiations with the court of Rome were at once commenced to obtain the nomination of an ecclesiastic of sufficiently exalted rank to perform the ceremony of the coronation; for, strange to say, though Hayti had had an emperor and a king, and had now again given itself an emperor, a bishop it had never had since the expulsion of the white population. Up to the time wherein we are writing, the clergy in Hayti, with a few honourable exceptions, have been represented by a set of runaway French, Italian, and Spanish priests, or adventurers, who in many cases have never received ordination, who lead lives of scandalous immorality, and who live in brotherly harmony with the practisers of Vaudoux magic. Christophe, it is said, on assuming the royal title, applied to the pope for a bishop, but never received an answer; while, during Boyer's presidency, negotiations were opened for the establishment of a concordat, but were broken off again because the papal court demanded greater independence for the clergy than the Haytian government was disposed to grant. Faustin's attempts to secure a real bishop to perform the ceremony of his coronation proved equally abortive, his negotiator having, by some misconduct, given umbrage at Rome. However, this individual, who enjoyed the title of chief-almoner to the emperor, chose to conceal his failure, and to return to his country with the self-bestowed title of Bishop of Hayti; and thus the coronation was duly celebrated on the 18th of April 1852, and was not a whit less brilliant for being rather spurious.

Thus far had we written in the full assurance that Emperor Soulouque had still his 'right divine to govern wrong.' But now (Feb. 2) we receive news that the creator of the Due de Limonade and the Marquis de Marmalade will bestow his titles upon the salt of the earth no longer. Soulouque is dethroned. The Haytian Republic is once more established, and General Fabre Geffrard, its president, and only 'nearly a black man,' reigneth in our Black Emperor's stead.

#### OUR COUSIN ALICE.

I HAD certainly not recovered from the effects of the severe wounds received in the battles fought between Cawnpore and Lucknow, when I met again, after four years of separation, my cousin Alice. My brain must have been less steady than usual; and it was perhaps a little turned by my being regarded as the hero of the little world, formed by the county families and early friends, who met to congratulate me on my return to England from the seat of war in the east. I ought to have had a mother to nurse me, but I had none. I was an orphan. Yet it was to the house which, in my father's lifetime, had been my home that I came back.

There was the great down, wooded nearly to the summit, which I remembered so well, where the coursing meetings used to be held. I could scarcely believe, as I entered the drawing-room before dinner, that the same party which had so often assembled for the great gatherings on Marley Down, were not drawn to the place now for the same purpose. But other customs prevailed. My young cousin, Sir Reginald Moore, was no sportsman. The sleek greyhounds had all disappeared; I missed them sorely. The old squire—my grandfather—had been dead more than a twelvemonth. His youngest and favourite son—my

own parent—had gone before him to the grave. Our present host, the representative of the family, was a fair, pensive-looking youth of five-and-twenty, fond of poetry, accomplished, handsome, but with scarcely nerve enough to fire off a gun.

Our fair cousin, Alice Verschoyle, had always been a subject for contention between us. We had been jealous of her smiles in boyhood; as men, we were still more covetous of her favour. Through all the Crimean battles, and 'neath the burning Indian sun, in the perilous march with Havelock, and while I lay prostrated by illness after that fierce time of conflict was past, I had worn her picture next my heart. The case had turned away a ball that would else have pierced it.

There had been no avowed betrothal between us when we parted, but her fair form was pressed unresistingly in my arms, and she wept her long farewell on my shoulder. It was true that she called herself my sister in the letters she wrote to me, but I never acknowledged the relationship. Nothing but poverty stood between us then; and now, I had risen in my profession. If I found her still in the same humour, and willing to share the vicissitudes of a soldier's lot, I meant to make her my bride. As I looked at her across the table—for we were not seated near each other—and saw a deep blush mount to her face beneath my ardent gaze, I believed that she would not refuse my petition.

Perhaps she thought me vain, for every one was calling upon me to tell the tale of our Indian battles. She did not look at me; her eyes were quite averted: but other women were weeping as I spoke of the noble patience of those heroic ladies, whose names will live in history for their gallant endurance of suffering at Lucknow. I had seen those pale victims, some widowed, some orphans, all most deeply tried by the privations and anxieties of those long months of waiting, before the heavy boom of the guns told them that our brave English soldiery were advancing to their rescue.

Can I ever forget that midnight evacuation! The dread silence, the long lines of troops, the awful intervals, where all our care could not prevent danger, through which those half-fainting women and their brave but exhausted defenders had to pass. Thank Heaven! all went well—that no accident, no untimely panic marred the plans of our gallant chief. Our triumph would have been scant if one of that heroic band had perished on their way to freedom!

Reginald had written some verses on the subject, which Alice had set to music. I had not seen a tear in her bright eyes previously, but they coursed each other down her cheeks as she sang my young cousin's words. I do not remember what they were, but I thought them scarcely worthy of the subject, and certainly undeserving of the precious drops they called forth.

A window was open near me, and I was out upon the terrace before the song was ended. It was dark; and a couple of persons who were seated on one of the benches set against the wall, were talking earnestly, and did not perceive me. I heard a lady's voice say:

'When her mourning for her grandfather is laid aside, Miss Verschoyle will marry her cousin. Sir Reginald has one of the finest estates in this county. It will be an excellent match for her, and has been long contemplated by the family.'

It was, nevertheless, the first time such a thought had entered my mind, and I was one of Alice's nearest relatives—too near, some persons might consider, for us to think of marrying; but, if it were

so, the same objection applied to Reginald: we were all first-cousins to each other.

At that moment, there was a stir in the drawing-room: a lady had fainted. I saw her borne out, and the fair head with its long sweeping curls of golden brown, which had once rested so confidingly on my shoulder, was now supported by another arm. It was Alice and Reginald. I did not stay to look at them; one word from his lips reached me. I saw the look of intense agony on his fair face, so like her own, as he bent over the insensible girl. In one moment, I knew that he loved her. I could not wait to see her eyes open. I had stood fire many times, but I had not courage to face the conviction that first glance of reviving consciousness might bring to me, that the passion I read in the dreaming boy's eyes and voice was returned.

I believe I was half mad when I rushed away. I had travelled night and day to meet her; as I have said, I had not recovered from the effects of the injury I had sustained during the street-fighting at Lucknow; when, in addition to severe wounds, the beam of a falling house had descended on my head, completely stunning me; and but for the gallantry of my comrades, I should have been left for dead, at the mercy of our savage foes—and now I had seen her in the arms of another. I had heard her lips repeat his musical words; nay, I had seen her very senses forsake her under the spell of emotions raised by what appeared to me to be paltry common-place lines. As I stood in the large hall where we had all three played as children, to which, as a man, I had so often pictured my return, the bitterest mortification took possession of my soul. For the first time, I remembered how inferior was my social position to that of my cousin. I, a mere soldier of fortune, who must return to a burning climate, and a country on which henceforward women will look with dread and aversion; while all around me, bathed in moonlight, from the high windows of that noble hall, hung with trophies of the chase and the banners of our ancestors, I saw the wide domain which belonged to the young baronet. Those were his deer trooping under the trees. The magnificent cedars grouped in the midst of the dewy lawn, the spreading elms and beeches, the majestic oaks—all belonged to that beardless boy. What were a few years of manhood, a few daring deeds which had won for me the rewards which a soldier covets—the medals and crosses at which she had scarcely glanced—compared to his advantages!

As I went up the stairs, each step awoke painful recollections. We had come down them together on the morning when I left home to rejoin my regiment, then just ordered on active service. Here, at the landing, we paused long, while she gave me her picture, and, after some hesitation, the chain of golden hair that still supported it. Had it been woven for me? Alice would not confess, but she did not deny the fact. I always believed that it was so.

As I stood looking down into the lighted hall, two persons came into it together. Alice seemed well, and scarcely to need the support of Reginald's arm, on which she was leaning. I heard him say:

'Is it so, Alice? Have you quite decided? Will you never repent, and wish to draw back from the words you have spoken to-night?'

He took her hand and looked in her fair face with mournful tenderness. I did not wait to hear her answer. I could not control myself sufficiently to move away quietly. As I looked down upon them for the last time, I saw that Alice had started from her companion, and was gazing upward; I even fancied that she called me, but I did not return or answer her. Better for all of us would it have been if I had heeded that sweet warning-voice.

I rushed to my room at once, and for hours I walked

up and down, passion swelling within me like the surging sea. Then for a short time my mood changed, my suspicions seemed unfounded. I recalled Alice's joy at seeing me again; the soft broken words of delight she had uttered when I came upon her by surprise in the park; our long pleasant walk together, so full of old recollections and present confidences. If no plighted vows had been exchanged, it was because we both had long known that we were pledged to each other. The words I had heard on the terrace now seemed to me idle gossip, mere nonsense. The morning would bring her again before me, bright, beautiful, and truthful as ever. For an instant, the demon of jealousy stood rebuked; but again and again he returned, maddening my already fevered brain and overworked frame, till every nerve quivered with excitement.

The same images haunted me when, at last, I lay down, exhausted by fatigue, but deeming it impossible to sleep, just as a dull gray haze spread over the landscape, obscuring the moonlight which was soon to give place to the dawn. The last thing that I remember was the swaying of the fir-tops, as the old trees opposite to my open window rocked to the blast.

When I woke, it was broad daylight. The sun was shining in, tempered by silken hangings, that waved in the fresh breeze. A part of each of the shutters was closed, and the room, considering that the morning was so brilliantly fine out of doors, was somehow shaded and darkened. I very faintly recollect the train of ideas which had so tortured me ere I lay down, but an impatient feeling, such as might visit a sufferer from long sickness or a prisoner, assailed me. I tried to start up from my couch, but a strange feeling of weakness, like what I had experienced when I was first wounded, came over me, and I fell back again.

As I moved, a woman-servant stepped forward quickly, and in gentle, measured tones, spoke to me. I did not understand a word of what she said; a mist came before my eyes, her voice rang indistinctly in my ears, a horrible, sickening dread came over me—images of horror seemed to fill the room, and I fainted. When I revived, my mind was clear; the spectral forms which had flashed across my vision became distinct, and I recognised them as shapes in a dream. I felt that I was ill and weak, and as I, the once strong man, lay prostrate, incapable of moving, I thanked my God for the helplessness which it might be had saved me from such guilt as in the visions of the night had been mine.

I do not know whether at that moment any one was watching by me. The person or persons in the room, if it were so, must have been very quiet, for not a sound disturbed me as I recalled the images which had been present with me in that fevered dream. The room I was in was one that I knew well, and outside the window ran a narrow ledge of ornamental stone-work, which went along the entire front of that old house. It was barely wide enough to step upon, yet I fancied that I had walked the whole length of it in safety, till in my dream I came to my cousin Reginald's room. He was now the master of the house, and slept in what had once been my grandfather's apartment. When I was a boy, the kind old man had had an illness, during which my mother nursed him; and the severest reprimand I ever received from her was when one of the servants told her that Master Hubert had got upon the stone ledge outside his window, and tried to walk round to one that opened into the chamber where she was sitting up with the invalid. My father said then that it was a thing impossible to be done, but in my dream I fancied that I had achieved it.

My cousin was a painter as well as a poet, and the

room in which I imagined him lying was full of indications of his tastes, which were all gentle and refined. A half-finished picture stood on an easel, at which he must have been gazing before he fell asleep. It was Alice reading a letter, with a bright flush of happiness and warm love in her face. A small but beautiful statue, modelled after some old classic ideal of loveliness, but with her features, stood on a table at his elbow. He was stretched on a couch, still dressed as I had seen him, calm, but with the melancholy expression which was habitual to him. His delicate, aristocratic features and pale complexion, which looked yet whiter in the lamplight, were almost feminine in their regular beauty. I do not know what disturbed his slumbers, for all passed dreamlike in silence; but he woke, and, rising up, appeared to come forward to close the window at which I was standing. The ledge was so narrow, that it seemed to me a touch would throw me off my balance, and precipitate me many fathoms to the paved court below. The instinct of self-preservation, mingled with a strong antagonistic feeling, arose within me as my rival approached. I grasped the stanchion of the window, and sprang into the room.

Some kind of misty indistinct recollections came next of a conflict between us, in which passes were made, the statuette was thrown down, and the canvas of the picture pierced through with the sharp point of the blade enclosed in a sword-stick, which I had snatched up before leaving my room, and with which I had steadied my footsteps on the giddy ledge. I felt the excitement of battle once more, the fierce rising of blood-thirsty passion. Though no words were exchanged, we seemed to know that we were rivals, and that a death-struggle was passing between us.

How it ended, I knew not. At this point my sleep must have been interrupted, for I remembered no more of my dream, which chilled me as I recalled it. I did not mention it to any human being during my slow recovery, and few words were spoken in my presence. I had been dangerously ill for many weeks, which had passed in the delirium caused by brain fever. My wounds had reopened, and the greatest caution was necessary; above all things, the mention of any agitating topic had been prohibited.

I began to think that my jealous surmises were unfounded, when I woke up night after night and found Alice watching over me. The attendant slumbered in her chair unchidden, while my true love waited upon me. Sometimes her kind gentle mother would call her away, and say that she overtaxed her strength, but Alice would come back again at the same hour the next night.

The horrid dream which had followed my access of jealous fury returned again and again. I rejoiced that Alice's sweet face was beside my pillow when I woke from it. Nothing evil could remain near her, and the bad spirit was rebuked; but he took possession of my senses in her absence, bringing for ever before me that accursed vision.

I thought that the house seemed singularly quiet, and that my nurses were all grave, even sad, in their demeanour; but this was probably occasioned by the precariousness of my situation. Alice, in her white flowing robes, looked almost spectral; but I trusted that, with returning health, I should see her under happier auspices, and, if she grieved for me, her pale dejected face did not appear less lovely than when she smiled upon me on my return.

No rival came between us now. My sick-chamber was visited only by the physicians, and by those whose especial task it was to wait upon me. Not a breath of what was passing without reached me. I felt surprised that my cousin Reginald, for whom I was once more beginning to entertain affection, never came

to see me; but pride restrained the inquiry which often rose to my lips.

Once, when I casually mentioned his name, Alice looked troubled; a deep shade crossed her fair brow; her bright eyes filled with tears.

'Do not let us speak of any one but ourselves,' she said softly. 'This is my world. It may be selfishness, but I cannot interest myself in anything that goes forward outside of these closed doors, till you are well enough to leave this chamber of sickness, and share the pains and pleasures of this changeable world with me. Think how bright everything looked when you returned from abroad, and how little we thought what a day, even an hour, might bring forth!'

I could not quarrel with her answer, though I strove to chase away the tears that followed it, and lead her thoughts to brighter prospects. When I spoke of returning with her to the east, she looked at me sadly. I thought that she doubted whether I should ever recover sufficiently to resume the duties of my profession, though I assured her that I already felt much stronger and better.

'It is not that,' she said hesitatingly; 'perhaps, Hubert, you will never need to go to India. Do not question me. I ought not to have said even this much; but there have been changes among us since you have been ill. It is so hard to dissemble with you!'

Her mother's entrance prevented the revelation that was quivering on her lips; but my curiosity was roused. The next day I rose, to try my strength, and walked to the window. Of late, the vision had not come so strongly, and I started at seeing the narrow stone ledge exactly as I had imagined it to be. I fancied myself still dreaming; and tired by this slight exertion, I crept back to my couch.

It was mid-winter; the parlour was deep in snow; the stream that traversed the lower part of the grounds was frozen, and long icicles hung from the eaves, before my strength was sufficiently restored for me to leave my room. Even then, my first appearance was a surprise to the family. I had not mentioned my intention; and the lights were shining warmly and cheerily as I entered the drawing-room, where the large Christmas fire was blazing, kindled with the yule-log from the last year's burning; but my feelings were chilled by seeing Alice and her mother sitting beside it dressed in deep mourning. They had never visited my sick-chamber in black, or said a word of any cause for assuming it.

Alice started up with a cry of surprise, and ran to meet me.

'What is this?' I said, laying my hand on her crepe sleeve. 'Why are you in mourning?'

She threw herself into my arms and wept. My aunt, who had risen hurriedly, came towards us and drew me nearer to the sofa.

'Sit down, poor fellow! you are not strong enough to support her. Ah, Hubert, we have all had much cause for sorrow. The shock will find you unprepared; but since you are once more among us, it cannot be kept from you. My nephew, Sir Reginald Moore, your cousin, is dead! We are in mourning for him.'

I was deeply grieved; and my aunt, seeing that for the moment I could not speak, said, with a glance at Alice, whose countenance was hidden on my arm:

'Do not ask me to tell you the particulars at present. I doubt whether we could, any of us, bear to speak of them, or you to hear what has filled this house with grief. Never was there a kinder heart, a better master—so young, too—so beloved.'

Alice's sobs shook her slight frame.

Her mother paused abruptly. 'We must not speak of it,' she said decisively; 'Mr Verschoyle will tell you this sad tale to-morrow.'

I was silent at her bidding, but my mind was full of surprise and sorrow. The wild dream in which I had seemed to myself to enter Reginald's chamber recurred to my thoughts. It appeared to have been a presentiment of the coming woe; and I remembered with deep regret the unkind thoughts towards my cousin which I had entertained when I saw him—how little either of us supposed that it was for the last time.

It was quite impossible that we should, any of us, turn our thoughts from this painful subject. I did not remain in the room long; and when my uncle, seeing how greatly fatigued and depressed I appeared to be, offered me his arm, I accepted it, and went at once back to the sick-chamber, which I had quitted with such different feelings.

The old butler handed us a light as we passed through the hall, saying gravely: 'I am glad to see you able to get about, Sir Hubert.'

I staggered as he spoke. The words seemed to pierce through and through me. Strange as it may seem, it had not, in the surprise of hearing of my cousin's death, occurred to me that I was his heir. He was so much younger than myself; I had always considered that he was certain to marry, and would in all probability survive me; never had my thoughts rested on the possibility of my inheriting his rights!

My uncle saw how much I was distressed. 'Servants never miss an opportunity of addressing a person by his title,' he said bitterly. 'Even that old fellow who knew poor Reginald in his cradle! But surely, my dear Hubert, you must know that you are now the head of our family.'

'I had not thought of it,' I said, moving on with difficulty. 'I do not think that my brain has been quite steady for some time—everything seems to reel before my eyes. Come to my room; I cannot sleep till you have told me how my poor young cousin died.'

I believe that my uncle exercised great caution in what he imparted to me, but I scarcely remember what words he used. He tried very hard to dissuade me from listening, but I insisted on hearing all that was known respecting an event which was wrapped in mystery. My cousin had been found dead, with marks of violence on his person, when his valet entered his room one morning during my illness. He had suffered very much for some time from low spirits, arising from Alice's having rejected the offer of his hand which he had repeatedly made to her. She was so dreadfully affected by the idea that despair on this account had led him to put an end to his existence, that the subject was most carefully avoided in her presence. At first, it had been imagined that robbers had entered the house, which was known to contain much valuable plate and jewellery. There were some indications of this having been the case; but neither Sir Reginald's purse nor his watch, which were on the table, had been taken, and the most strenuous search and sedulous inquiries had failed in eliciting the fact of any burglars having been in the neighbourhood. Nothing had been left undone or untried, and the conclusion at which the family had arrived was a most painful one. It was thought best to let the matter drop.

I listened as though I were in a dream, but not the slightest idea that I was in any way connected with this sad and strange event occurred to me. My uncle stayed with me for some time, but I scarcely spoke to him. When he was gone, I lay down, quite exhausted with fatigue, and slept.

The agitation which I had undergone brought on a relapse, and I was confined to my room for weeks. When I recovered my senses—for during the whole time my brain was confused and weak—cheerful

images surrounded me. My relatives had been advised by the physicians to lay aside their mourning, and all mention of melancholy topics was forbidden. I took my place among them once more, gradually resuming my former habits, and at length growing accustomed to the change produced in them by my being treated as the master of the house.

My engagement to Alice was now universally known and acknowledged. Her parents acquiesced in it, and no objection was made to my wish that our marriage should be speedily solemnised. Her health was shaken, and it was considered that it would be better for both of us if the tie was cemented without unnecessary delay. There was no great preparation. All passed quietly. We walked across the park to the little church in the village, which was gaily hung with flowers that the early breeze had brought into existence. Alice's coronal of white roses had been woven for her that morning with the dew upon their petals.

We were to leave home for a short time; and while my bride was bidding farewell to her mother, I went to my room to fetch down a travelling-cloak which had been my companion in many an arduous campaign. As I drew it off the hook, something fell clattering down. I stooped and picked up the sword-stick which had done me good service in the dark streets of Constantinople among the drunken Bashi-Bazouks and thieving Greeks. The sight of the weapon recalled the dream which I had had when I was first taken ill—I had forgotten it lately. Reginald's dimly lighted room, the poor, graceful youth reclining among works of art, with the pale gleam of the night-lamp shining on his handsome face. I shuddered, and was about to put aside the sword-stick, when some involuntary impulse made me try to unsheathe it. The blade was rusted in the scabbard, and would not come forth. My hands trembled; I was forced to lean against the wall; when at last, with a more vigorous effort, I succeeded, and saw a dull red stain upon the blue sheen of the polished steel.

At that moment, my name was called. I threw the weapon back into the closet from which I had taken it, and hurried down. The carriage was at the door; Alice was shedding her parting tears on her mother's shoulder. The postilions were restraining with difficulty their impatient horses. Every one was crowding round us with congratulations and good wishes. I paused one moment on the threshold. Should I reveal the dark thoughts passing through my mind? After all, what were they? Mere vague surmises, based upon the airy fabric of a dream, while before me was life—real, palpable happiness. I drew Alice away from her parents, impatiently, but with tenderness, lifted her into the carriage; and the next moment, the ancestral oaks and beeches, the peaked roofs of the old hall, were fast fading from our view.

A month passed quickly with us. I think, I believe, that Alice was happy. For myself, I cannot tell; I seemed to live in a dream, less real than the accursed vision which, day and night, was present to my eyes. If I slept, I started up, imagining myself walking along that giddy ledge, steadyng myself by the aid of a weapon down which blood was slowly dropping. My wife imagined that the nervous starts and tremors which often shook my frame were the remains of my long illness. All that was soothing and gentle lay in her voice and manner, yet their very sweetness tortured me when the thought was roused that I had done a deed for which my life might be the forfeit. Must I lose her?

Never was this sensation stronger than when we drove up the long avenue leading to our home. There were her parents, whom I regarded as my

own now; the old servants, who had known us from infancy. Must I stand before them as a culprit—a murderer? Would any one believe that I had done this most vile deed in my sleep—unconsciously—I, who had profited so largely by my cousin's death; and yet, could the tortures of the prisoner in his condemned cell be greater than I must endure if I lived among them, bearing the weight of such a burden on my heart? Could I hide it from Alice? —from those who sat at the same table with me, and were so near me in blood?

As I crossed the threshold, even while Alice was blushingly receiving her parents' kisses and congratulations, my resolve was made, and before night-fall, put in practice. Nothing could exceed the surprise of my relatives when, after hurriedly opening the letters that awaited my return, I said that in one of them my immediate presence in London was required. There was but just time to catch the train at the next station. I took nothing with me but a change of clothes, and the sword-stick, which had lain unnoticed in the dark corner to which I had consigned it; and, declining Alice's offer to accompany me, I left her with her parents, and was soon travelling through the soft darkness of the summer night, alone—perhaps, it might be, exercising for the last time the privileges of freedom.

I did not follow the route I had marked out, but, after the first mile, I directed the coachman to turn his horses' heads, and drive me to the house of the nearest county magistrate. He was an old friend of our family, and nothing could exceed his distress when I made known my errand. In vain he argued with me that the impression on which I was acting had been formed under the influence of delirium. I shewed him the weapon with the stain of blood upon the blade, and surrendered my person into his hands, desiring that the fullest and most complete investigation might take place.

I now heard for the first time the exact particulars of the state in which Sir Reginald Moore was found when his servant entered the room the morning after his death. There could be no doubt that it had been brought about by violent means, but whether his own hand or that of a murderer had put an end to his life, had never been ascertained. Every circumstance corresponded with the images in the dream, as I had for some time imagined it to be, which had shewn me his last moments. The absence of the weapon which had caused his death fearfully corroborated the idea I had lately entertained. There had been marks, my old friend was forced to confess, of some person or persons having entered the room by the window, which was standing open, but this was contradicted by there being no footprints on the border beneath; and the impression was that Sir Reginald had himself thrown away the weapon which had inflicted that fatal wound. Search had been made for it, however, in vain.

Though my version of the story was almost incredible—in spite of the many circumstances which told against me—my countrymen believed it. My having voluntarily surrendered to take my trial, at the moment which should have been one of the happiest of my life, was regarded as a strong proof that my guilt was not premeditated. No waking man, it was decided, could have passed to and fro in safety along that dizzy ledge. I certainly could not have done it again. Then the long illness, during which my brain was affected, beginning that very night; the wounds, still unhealed, received in my country's battles, made that English jury regard it as impossible that the officer before them, with the Victoria Cross and Crimean clasps and medals on his breast, could be a cold-blooded murderer. Those twelve honest men judged me by the dictates of their own noble hearts,

and, after a short consultation, unanimously acquitted me.

But I had been arraigned before a severer tribunal, which was still unsatisfied. The revengeful, passionate impulses which maddened me on that night—which turned my brain, and made me pass in sleep that fearful Rubicon which divides guilt from innocence—were still remembered, and filled me with remorse; for me, the gifts of wealth and happiness seemed too rich a boon. How could I enjoy life under the shadow of the woods that once were *his*, or revisit the scene of that dreadful deed—the property of the fine young fellow whom I had deprived of life? Better, as it seemed to me, to be separated from all I loved, and perish—as the men of my old regiment were perishing day by day—a victim to sun-stroke and disease, on the burning soil of India—than profit by the untimely death of Reginald Moore!

My preparations were made silently. I did not mention even to my wife the resolution I had formed when, after the trial was over, she pressed me to return to our home. The command of my regiment had been kept open for me till the last moment. I took my passage in the *Indus*, resolved to avail myself of the opportunity thus afforded for wiping off the stigma which, in spite of the acquittal of my countrymen, still weighed me down. It was only after I had received notice that the vessel would sail in a few days, that I told Alice I was about to leave her.

"No, Hubert," she said, gently; "I am a better dissembler than yourself. I have guessed your intention; a word spoken in sleep revealed it to me. I have been as busy as yourself the last few weeks, only you have not had time to notice it. I mean to accompany you to India."

Alice was not less firm than myself, and her cause was a better one. Her parents, too, much as it grieved them to part with her, supported her arguments. How it might have been if I had been separated from her, I know not, for my mind was disturbed, my health much shattered; but her care of me during that long voyage restored me to vigour and tranquillity. When we landed at Calcutta, I was in all respects equal to the fulfilment of the duties of my profession.

We have been parted for many months now, but fortune favours me, and I look forward, at the end of the campaign, to our reunion. The morbid agonies of remorse, from which I suffered so much, no longer distract me. I feel that I am not responsible for an action committed when my senses were not under the control of reason. The stirring scenes in which I have played a not inglorious part have restrung my nerves, and invigorated my constitution. In the heat of battle, I have been unscathed; in the burning jungles and aguish swamps, I have watched and slept unharmed. This new year, it is said, will see the termination of active warfare; and, when peace is proclaimed, I shall lay down my sword, and return, with my sweet, heroic, patient wife, to England, satisfied that manly, arduous exertion, and the remembrance of that providential care which guarded the soldier in the battle, will enable me to struggle with the phantoms which at one time threatened to haunt our pleasant home.

As I look across the devastated fields, black and bare as if swarms of locusts had passed over them—as the smoke mounts to the lurid sky of burning villages, set on fire by accident or design, in the wake of the army, despite the stern edicts of our gallant commander-in-chief, and the vigilance of the provost-marshall—England, with its smiling, peaceful homes, rises before me. I see the old house under Marley Down smiling a welcome to me; and I hear,

instead of the shrill *réveille* and the dropping shots, the cheerful cawing of the rooks in the elm-trees, and the bark of the old squire's harriers, as the pack bursts from the kennel.

#### UP IN THE CLOUDS.

Was it not so great a man as Dr Franklin who once compared balloons to babies; as being of no use at present, but likely to become of use in all due time? At all events, such has been my own feeling upon the matter, and what I feel is (to myself, at least) of equal consequence with what Dr Franklin felt.

This opinion concerning the practicability of traversing the 'viewless fields of air,' is not, I confess, founded on any deep scientific knowledge, and far less upon practical experiment. I never myself constructed any dove, as Archytas did, to fly with artificial pinions, although I have often seen it done in the theatres since his time. I never cast myself from any precipitous height in the faith of elaborate wings, as the Abbot of Tungland was enthusiastic enough to do at Stirling Castle, to please King James IV. I leave such famous feats—and wings—to more soaring spirits; and if, on rare occasions, I have made 'a beast of myself,' I may conscientiously observe that I have never made a bird. Nevertheless, the history of the 'perilous ascents' of aeronauts has been always deeply interesting to me. Consider how infinitely more audacious must that man have been who first rose high enough in the air to risk the breaking of his neck, than he who first intrusted himself to a locomotive, or dived beneath the sea! Since, if anything does go wrong, there is absolutely no escape—none; as no mortal can hope for life, even in a couple of thousand feet fall (the minimum), no matter upon what end, or limb, he may chance to come down.

The Montgolfier brothers, although doubtless the fathers of aeronautics, never won my admiration; they had science, indeed, but they did not believe in it to the extent of trusting their own personal safety to its protection. They sent, instead, a sheep, a cock, and a duck 1500 feet into the air, in one of their balloons, and the poor cock got his wing broken—"through the too great rarefaction of the air," averred the more sceptical; "through a kick from the sheep," retorted the Montgolfiers.

M. Pilatre de Rozier was the first mortal to intrust himself, in 1783, to a balloon, 'of a spheroidal shape, 45 feet wide and 75 high;' but he did not take any very ambitious flight, 'ninety times high as the moon,' by any means. He preferred to rise but 300 feet, and remain at that inconsiderable altitude, 'the balloon being held by long cords until it gradually descended.' One would have thought that this gentleman belonged to that large community of persons who never go into the water before they can swim, but this was not the case. Rozier and the Marquis d'Arlandes, a major of infantry, were the first who ever tempted Providence in an unfeathered balloon. In this 'they soared to an elevation of 3000 feet, and traversed, by a circuitous and irregular course, the whole extent of Paris,' filling, as may well be imagined, its impressionable inhabitants with the idea that the French nation had conquered space, and were about to be the monarchs of Air, as they had been so many centuries, of Earth. 'A curious circumstance occurred during the passage of the floating mass; to the gazers planted on the towers of Notre Dame, it chanced to intercept the body of the sun, and thus gave them, for a few seconds, the spectacle of a total eclipse.' It is my belief that poor M. Rozier never recovered from the idea of having effected this phenomenon; intoxicated with success, he went on ballooning until he dropped, as in those early

days was certain to happen sooner or later; and even in these times, it is not an amusement which, indulged in to excess, is looked upon with favour by the insurance-offices. 'It has been alleged,' says the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, with some humour, 'that when the balloon had reached so high that the objects on earth were no longer distinguishable, the Marquis d'Arlandes began to think that his curiosity and ambition were sufficiently gratified.' The *savant*, on the other hand, could never get high enough, and was always setting light to more straw. At last, when some cracks were heard near the top of the balloon, and some holes observed to be burning in the sides, the major (and small blame to him) became outrageously terrified, and compelled his companion to take a more unscientific view of things. We can fancy the marquis exclaiming with poor *Panurge*: 'O twice and thrice happy those that plant cabbages; they have always one foot on the ground, and the other not far from it. . . . O that I were but safe upon dry land, with somebody kicking me behind;' and we entirely sympathise with his feelings of relief upon touching *terra firma*. The two travellers had described a track of six miles, and been in the air twenty-five minutes, some of which must have been very long ones. The machine in which this voyage was made was a smoke-balloon—the Montgolfier plan—and its success goaded M. Charles, the inventor of the hydrogen-gas method, to new experiments.

In a balloon of tiffany, therefore, thus inflated, MM. Charles and Robert started from the Tuilleries on the 1st of December, and, in the language of an impassioned spectator, 'soared like demigods to the abode of the Immortals, to receive the reward of intellectual progress.' The demigods descended at Nesle, about twenty-five miles from Paris, in perfect safety. The balloon, although become rather flaccid, still retained a great buoyant force when relieved of the weight of the travellers; and although the sun had set, and the night was beginning to close, M. Charles determined to take another trip without a companion. His courage was well rewarded. Having shot up two miles high in ten minutes, the sun rose again to him in full orb, while the vapours collected below, and covered the earth from his sight. Then the moon began to shine and shed her beams over these accumulated masses. The whole scene and situation were of such a solemn grandeur, that this audacious mortal, alone in the air, and separated from the world of his fellows, could not restrain his tears.

On the 28th of June 1784, an ascent was made at Lyon before the king of Sweden, then travelling as Count Haga—in which character, it will be remembered, M. Dumas introduces him to us—by two aéronauts, one of whom was a young lady—Madame Thiblé. She was the first female who ever made an attempt to rejoin that angelic throng, from which, as we all know, divine woman has been temporarily separated for our delectation; or, in other words, the first lady who was ever up in the clouds. She attained an elevation of 18,500 feet, from whence dropping a flag with staff weighing 14 pounds, it took no less than seven minutes to reach the earth.

On the 19th of September, in the same year, royalty took its first aerial voyage, in the somewhat disreputable person of the Duke de Chartres, afterwards *Égalité* Orleans. When they were 6000 feet high, the duke began to be alarmed at a proximity to heaven which he had never calculated upon reaching, and absolutely 'pierced the lower part of the silk bag with his sword,' in order to get down the quicker. This expedition was up in the clouds—and thunder-clouds too—for five hours, and travelled 135 miles.

There is generally grandeur and always peril in a

balloon ascent, but very little of humour; even Mr Albert Smith had a great deal of his natural comicality taken out of him, as he confesses, when he tempted the Spirit of the Air some years ago. The following expedition of M. Testu is therefore remarkable, both for his ludicrous persistency in going up in the clouds, and staying there, without any object, and for the absurd obstacles which he encountered in attaining his various elevations. He went up alone in a balloon of glazed tiffany, constructed by himself, and furnished with auxiliary wings, and deferred his departure till four o'clock in the afternoon, when it threatened rain. When 3000 feet high, he found he wanted ballast—which I can easily imagine was the case; and in order to avoid waste of gas, he endeavoured to descend by the reaction of his wings; although these were shattered in the attempt, he managed to alight upon a cornfield, and there he collected stones without leaving the car. Being soon surrounded by curious peasants, the proprietor of the land and his vassals demanded compensation for the damage done to their corn, and on its being refused them, seized hold of the stay of the balloon, which still floated at some height, and so dragged the prisoner through the air, in a sort of triumph, towards the police-office. The whole affair reads like some humorous improbability of Mr Edgar Poe's, transferred by some strange mistake to the Encyclopedias. M. Testu, by pointing to his broken wings, had luckily convinced these people that he could not possibly escape, and finding that their loss and that of his cloak and other articles had considerably lightened the machine, he suddenly cut the stay, or cord, and took an abrupt leave of his astonished captors. He soon arrived at a height from whence he heard thunder rolling beneath him; but as the 'small frozen particles floating in the atmosphere' began to diminish the buoyancy of the balloon, he had to come down again to part with some of the stones, which he was too conscientious to throw overboard at hazard, although, whatever mischief they did would have been probably put down to aérolites. A third time he descended, in order to obtain a good view of a fox-chase between Etouen and Varville, but determined finally to pass the night in the sky. He was involved in thickest darkness, and then in an awful thunder-storm; the thermometer, read by the lightning flashes, pointed to 21, and snow and sleet fell around him. The balloon, too, was affected with sort of undulating motion. 'A calm at last succeeding, he had the pleasure of seeing the stars, and embraced that opportunity to take some necessary refreshment.' Fancy that lonely breakfast of his up in the clouds! How high the game must have been, and what an extravagant rise in the bread! At half-past two, the day broke; but he waited to see the sun rise, ere he quietly descended at Campremi, about sixty-eight miles from Paris.

The first English aéronaut appears to have been one Mr Blanchard, who crossed the British Channel in January 1785, in company with Dr Jeffries, an American; but General Money who ascended from Norwich, with the like intention, had the misfortune to drop into the water, and was not rescued for six hours. Another gentleman, in crossing the Irish Channel, encountered the like mishap, and was carried along in his unusual maritime conveyance at something like twenty miles an hour; a ship *going the other way*, however, very benevolently ran her bowsprit into his balloon, and so cut short an excursion which might otherwise have been terminated by the North Pole. It was in attempting to return Mr Blanchard's visit that poor Pilatre de Rozier lost his life in so horrible a manner. The whole apparatus, with himself and M. Romain on board of it, took fire at the height of 3000 feet, and the

unfortunate voyagers were of course precipitated to the ground, a mangled chaos. Carlo Brioschi, astronomer-royal at Naples, in company with a celebrated aeronaut, in attempting to rise higher than any other mortal had done before him, got into an atmosphere so rarefied as to burst the balloon; nevertheless, its remnants checked their descent, and saved both their lives for the time; although Brioschi contracted a complaint from the fall which carried him to his grave. A Venetian nobleman and his wife were the next victims, and after them several others.

The parachute (guard for falling) was invented to diminish these risks, and as a means by which the endangered traveller of the upper air might descend at will. Mr Blanchard, during his journey of 300 miles from Lisle, had dropped a dog in a parachute without the animal sustaining any injury; but M. Garnerin was the first human being who ever left his comparatively safe vessel the balloon, in the upper air, and intrusted himself to that miserable cock-boat the parachute. It was doubtless with very terrible feelings that the intrepid fellow severed the cord that united him with the larger machine, and made up his mind to drop from an elevation higher than that of the combined height of the ten highest precipices in Great Britain. For a few seconds, we are told, the parachute, instantly expanding, descended sheer with an astonishing velocity, till it became tossed exceedingly, and took such wide oscillations that the basket, or car, in which the voyager was standing became at times almost horizontal. This oscillation is, it seems, very satisfactorily explained by men of science, and is somehow intimately connected with the square root of 8; but M. Garnerin was not in a condition to be comforted by any such reflection. 'Borne along by the influence of the wind, he passed over Marylebone and Somers Town, and almost grazed the houses of St Pancras. So violent was his fall, at last, that although, according to Cocker (but not that unhappy Cocker who fell from a parachute upon Blackheath), he ought to have only received such a shock as a person would get who drops freely from 34 feet, 'he was cast on his face, and a good deal cut with stones.' One of the stays of the machine had given way, it seems, and placed him in the most imminent peril throughout the descent; and 'he was much agitated and trembled excessively upon being released from the car.'

Of all the narratives of balloon ascents, however, there is none so satisfactory, because none undertaken with a more calm resolve, or a more noble motive, than that of M. Gay-Lussac, the (then) young French philosopher. He had been up in the clouds, in company with his friend M. Biot, once before, but had not reached an elevation sufficient to satisfy himself. Upon that occasion, they had taken up some birds and insects, and let them loose in the upper regions of the atmosphere, with some remarkable results. A violet bee 'flew away very swiftly, making a humming noise;' but at the altitude of 11,000 feet (I again quote from the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*), a green linnet, 'feeling itself abandoned in the midst of an unknown ocean, returned, and settled on the stays of the balloon.' A pigeon, placed on the edge of the car, 'rested awhile, measuring as it were the breadth of that unexplored sea which it designed to traverse; now launching into the abyss, it fluttered irregularly, and seemed to try its wings in the thin element; till, after a few strokes, it gained more confidence, and whirling in large spirals, like the birds of prey, it precipitated itself towards the mass of extended clouds, where it was lost from sight.'

Great precautions to secure accuracy had been taken in the preparation of the scientific instruments of the two philosophers; but even still more care was

exercised in respect to those which M. Gay-Lussac took up with him in his solitary flight. As it had been found impossible to count the vibrations of the magnetic needle, except during the very short intervals between the contrary rotations of the balloon, a needle of only six inches long was prepared, which should oscillate more quickly. The dipping-needle—about which, however, he was unable to detect anything certain—was magnetised and adjusted by the famous M. Coulomb. To protect the thermometer from the direct rays of the sun, it was enclosed within cylinders of pasteboard, covered with gilt paper. The hygrometers were sheltered nearly in the same way. The glass flasks, intended to bring down specimens of air from the highest regions of the atmosphere, had been so accurately exhausted, and their stop-cocks so carefully fitted, that after a lapse of eight days, they still preserved the vacuum.

'At the altitude of 14,480 feet, M. Gay-Lussac found that a key held in the magnetic direction, repelled with its lower, and attracted with its upper, end the north pole of the needle of a small compass . . . and it did the same at the vast height of 20,150 feet; a clear proof that the magnetism of the earth exerts its influence at the remotest distances. . . . The thermometer which stood at 82° Fahrenheit when he left the earth, subsided to 32.9 on the verge of congelation at the height of 18,636 feet, and to 14.9 at the utmost limit of the ascent, which was 23,040 feet above the level of the sea. . . . The air was here more than twice as thin as usual (the barometer having sunk to 12.95 inches), and rushed through the narrow opening of his exhausted flask with a whistling noise; but upon a subsequent analysis of it, below, it was found to be made up of the ordinary proportions. The philosopher, though warmly clad, suffered here from excessive cold. He also felt a difficulty in breathing, and his pulse and respiration were much quickened. His throat also became so parched from inhaling the dry attenuated air that he could hardly swallow a morsel of food; but beyond these, he experienced no inconveniences.'

This ends the tale of such balloon excursions as may be called historical. In more recent times, the thing has become a common exhibition, with money taken at the doors of the place of ascent, and a regular scale of charges—according to the size of the machine and the fame of the aéronaut—been set up, from ten guineas downwards for each passenger; at the contemplation of which vulgarities the Muse of History grows dumb. Nevertheless, the little party that travelled from London to Nassau performed perhaps the most striking journey in the annals of locomotion; while the late Mr Green was doubtless one before whom, as a daring adventurer, Mungo Park must pale. Marvellous, indeed, it was, that he who counted his aerial excursions by the hundred, should die in his bed at the usual number of feet above the level of the sea. I myself had once the distinguished honour of sitting in the same car with him, under the great balloon that had been to Germany, and the following are the particulars of my own ascent:

The great Nassau had been advertised for some days to start for the clouds, and myself and a college-friend, determined to tempt the dangers of the air, had secured two places in it. I cannot say that the knowledge that I was booked for the expedition, and could not possibly be balked in my expectation, gave me total and unalloyed satisfaction. I could not divorce my mind from the idea of the elevation which awaited me: I regarded the sun in the light of a luminous body with which I was about to be brought into personal contact; and I also found myself making curious calculations as to how long it would take a person—of

12 stone 6—to fall, upon a calm day, from twice the height of St Paul's. I passed several miserable nights in shooting downwards through bottomless space, and all of sudden coming to earth with a smash and—waking. The great Nassau, in fact, fully inflated and presenting a very threatening appearance, sat upon my chest whenever I suffered myself to slumber for a moment. Nevertheless, terrible as that tremendous machine was, as a nightmare, it was nothing to the horror with which I was inspired upon first beholding it in reality and open day. My sensations in childhood, upon reading of the awful increasing helmet in the *Castle of Otranto*, can alone be compared to those with which I contemplated the swelling, swaying mass which was perhaps about to bear me—by an exceedingly roundabout method—to my grave. I would have given the ten pounds already paid, twice over, to any fool out of that gaping crowd who would have taken my place in the car, without the exchange being discovered. That the same reflection was also permanent in the breast of my friend Jones was evident to me; but we had both far too much native delicacy to hint at the real state of affairs within us.

'We shall have a beautiful ascent,' observed he, tremulously, as we stepped into the car.

'Beautiful,' echoed I, with my teeth chattering; 'but don't you think the wind is getting up?'

'Yes,' replied he in a sort of frantic whisper, 'I do think so. It's going to be a tempest; one of the most frightful tempests within the memory of man.'

Our fellow-passengers, with the exception of Mr Green, wore the most miserable countenances of any three persons I ever beheld. It was easy to see that the laughter and cheering of the crowd beneath was grating upon their feelings precisely as it may be supposed to do upon those unfortunate persons who are about to be 'turned off'—to be *sus per coll.*, as the Latins have it—in front of the Old Bailey.

'Come, gentlemen,' exclaimed the aeronaut with untimely cheerfulness, 'if you have any messages for the world below, you had better leave them; we shall be off in a few minutes.'

How the huge billowy mass above did undulate, and what a terrible strain there began to be upon the ropes beneath!

'How long shall it be, exactly, sir, before we start?' inquired I.

'Not one minute,' replied he, looking me steadily in the face—not half a minute, sir. If you have any fears for yourself, any doubts in my experience'—

'I have,' exclaimed I, with unaffected earnestness; 'the greatest, the very greatest, I do assure you.'

'Then down the rope with you, like a shot.'

I was down the rope like a shot. I felt the ground once more—the beautiful firm ground—under my feet. I was thankful to Providence, to the aeronaut, to myself, to everybody: I did not heed the mocking jeers of that thoughtless throng in the very slightest. The bands began to play, the flags to wave, the mighty dome to shoot up from the cast-off ropes, with poor Jones on board of it. I felt the tears in the neighbourhood of my eyes as I thought upon his miserable condition. I watched him 'as far as human eye could see' into the empyrean, and then I went to the refreshment-room for a glass of brandy. Picture my horror, then, upon my arrival there, when I saw Jones's very counterpart standing at the bar of it already, and in the act of drinking brandy himself! I really thought that it was my poor friend dropped from the clouds.

'Smith!' cried he, turning round upon a sudden. 'Goodness gracious! can this be you?'

His gaze was directed to the blue abyss above us, as though he would say: 'Why, I thought you were up there, my unhappy friend;' but his tongue refused its office. He had not known of my escape

any more than I of his: he had not waited to hear what I replied to Mr Green, but he had heard what Mr Green had inquired of me, and slipped down the rope that was nearest to him, even before I had done the same.

It will thus be seen that, although I have been in a balloon, I cannot exactly profess to be an aéronaut; and yet how infinitely more judicious was my conduct than that of the intrepid citizen of the United States who is even now roaming about the fields of air, unable to get down again into his own beloved country, or indeed into any other. He was ignorant of everything connected with aéronautism, and had merely paid his money, as we did, to go up with a professional. They went up, and came down again in safety; but, upon touching earth, the aéronaut incautiously stepped first out of the car, let go of it, and the balloon, relieved of his weight, reascended with its astonished occupant. This, I think, was in the September of last year; and, according to the latest American advices, this voyager in spite of himself has not been heard of yet. When Jones and I read of this occurrence in the newspapers, we felt ourselves steeled against all ridicule, for the remainder of our lives, upon the subject of our attempted ascent in the great Nassau.

#### E C H O E S.

WHAT time we hold the onward track,  
Into the Future pressing fast,  
Up from the caverns of the Past  
There comes a lingering echo back—

A noiseless echo of the days  
That were to us, yet are no more,  
Of many friends we knew before  
Within our ancient dwelling-place.

And muffled sounds, without our will,  
Come up to us as from the grave,  
Or as the murmur of the wave  
Afar off when the night is still:

Old voices long forgotten quite,  
Or seeming unto us forgot,  
Like music from some distant grot,  
That trembles on the breeze of night.

There is a change come over all;  
Decay upon the aspen leaves,  
And blight upon the autumn sheaves;  
Eternal silence like a pall:

As when the dumb dark earth is laid  
In sadness o'er the beautiful,  
And blinded eyes with tears are dull  
To see the havoc death has made.

The happy smile, the clasped hand,  
The gleesome laugh shall be no more;  
The spirits calm we loved before  
Have passed into another land.

They are a portion of the Past.  
Yet comes a noiseless echo back,  
What time we hold the onward track,  
Into the Future pressing fast.

D.